Southern Gold Society
FOUNDED 2001
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Newsletter

Review of "Growing Pains" in *The Numismatist*

The article "Growing Pains" by Nancy Oliver and Richard Kelly, published in the May 2025 issue of *The Numismatist* (pages 52-53), offers a detailed look at the early challenges faced by the Charlotte Mint in North Carolina from 1838 to 1861. Drawing from National Archives records, the authors outline equipment failures, such as a leaking zinc roof and broken rollers, and personnel issues, including conflicts between Superintendent John Hill Wheeler and Assayer John H. Gibbon. A notable discovery is the discrepancy in the 1838 Charlotte half eagle mintage, reported as 12,886 coins by the mint but listed as 17,179 in the Red Book, suggesting this coin is rarer than previously thought. The article also highlights operational delays, such as sulfuric acid breakage and inadequate water supply, which hindered coining. This engaging account of the Charlotte Mint's early struggles and its eventual success in producing gold coins will captivate Southern Gold Society members interested in regional numismatic history.

Reference: Oliver, Nancy, and Richard Kelly. "Growing Pains." *The Numismatist*, May 2025, 52-53.

Historic Reunion of 1844-O Proof Gold Coins at ANA World's Fair of Money

In a remarkable event for numismatists, the unique 1844-O $5 and $10 Proof Gold Coins, minted in New Orleans, will be reunited for the first time in over a century at the ANA World's Fair of Money in Oklahoma City, August 19-23, 2025. These extraordinary rarities, last owned by the same collector at the 1890 Parmelee auction, will be displayed at GreatCollections' tables 901/1000 at the Oklahoma City Convention Center.

GreatCollections, the Irvine-based rare coin auction house, facilitated the sale of both coins to a single collector, now part of the prestigious Elite Collection, one of the finest assemblies of U.S. numismatic rarities. While the sale prices

remain undisclosed, the coins will be insured for $15 million during the event. Their historical significance is amplified by their believed purpose: minted to honor a visiting dignitary, a rare occurrence for proof coins struck at branch mints like New Orleans, marked with the distinctive “O” on the reverse.

These coins boast a storied provenance. Once part of the famed Parmelee Collection, they were acquired by William H. Woodin in 1890. The $10 Gold Eagle later joined Virgil Brand’s collection in 1911, while the $5 Half Eagle passed through Waldo Newcomer and King Farouk’s renowned collections. The 1844-O Liberty Gold Eagle, graded PCGS Proof-65 DCAM, resurfaced in the 1990s, while the Half Eagle, graded PCGS Proof-67 DCAM with CAC approval, remained elusive until its quiet appearance around 2021. Ian Russell, president of GreatCollections, noted the Half Eagle’s reemergence went unnoticed in numismatic circles, allowing their team to pursue its acquisition discreetly to reunite the pair.

David Akers, a respected numismatist, described the Half Eagle as “virtually perfect,” comparing its quality to the finest proof Liberty Head half eagles of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Both coins rank #45 in Jeff Garrett’s *100 Greatest U.S. Coins*, underscoring their significance. Notably, these rarities are absent from the Smithsonian’s otherwise comprehensive collection of the era.

Southern Gold Society members attending the ANA World’s Fair of Money are encouraged to visit GreatCollections’ tables to view these extraordinary coins. For more details, contact GreatCollections at 1-800-442-6467 or email info@greatcollections.com.

Rare 1859-O Seated Dollar Featured in Heritage Auction

The upcoming Heritage Auctions Summer FUN US Coins Signature Auction #1384, held July 17-20, 2025, presents a remarkable opportunity for collectors with Lot #3062: an 1859-O Seated Dollar graded MS64 by PCGS with CAC endorsement. This underrated O-Mint issue stands out for its bold cartwheel luster and high quality, making it a prized addition for Seated Liberty dollar enthusiasts.

The 1859-O, alongside the 1860-O, is often considered one of the more available dates in the Seated dollar series due to their mintages. However, this tells only part of the story. Large quantities of these New Orleans issues were stored in Mint bags at the Treasury for a century, with thousands released primarily between 1962 and 1964. Most of these coins suffered from bagmarks and graded in lower Mint State conditions due to prolonged handling and storage. Select Uncirculated examples like this MS64 are far scarcer, and near-Gem or finer pieces are exceptionally rare, highly coveted by series specialists.

This particular 1859-O dollar, identified as OC-1, R.1, Osburn-Cushing Die State c/e with a high mintmark, showcases silver fields and motifs with faint champagne-gold accents, complemented by bits of blue and amber-gold toning at the margins. Light abrasions are present, consistent with its Choice Uncirculated grade, but the CAC endorsement confirms its superior quality. PCGS reports a population of 29 in MS64 (3 in 64+), with only 4 finer, while CAC notes 6 in 64 and just 1 finer (as of 5/25).

Don’t miss this chance to acquire a standout piece from the Seated Liberty dollar series. For more details or to bid, visit the Heritage Auctions website for the Summer FUN Auction, Lot #3062.

Writers Needed

One of the purposes of the SGS is to “enjoy each member's knowledge.” This newsletter is one of the ways this numismatic knowledge is dispersed. The frequency of the newsletter is driven by the number of submissions for publication. The editor of the SGS eNewsletter needs new material and welcomes the opportunity to review your original article for publication. Articles should be relevant to the study of the gold coins and related history of the Dahlonega, Charlotte, and New Orleans branch mints and private minters Templeton Reid and the Bechtlers. If you do a presentation at a gathering or other venue, consider compiling your notes into an article. Do not worry about the grammar. The editor will do the rest. Electronic manuscripts should be submitted by email to contactus@southerngoldsociety.org.

Mission Statement

The Southern Gold Society was formed to increase the enjoyment and study of Southern gold coins and related history, through an informal, relaxed mix of education and fellowship. The society is reminiscent of those of a bygone era, in which connoisseurship and a gentlemanly appreciation of Southern gold coins is the order of the day.

Purpose

- To facilitate the enjoyment and study of the gold coins and related history of the Southern branch mints (Dahlonega, Charlotte, and New Orleans) and private Southern minters (Templeton Reid and the Bechtlers).
- To enjoy each member's knowledge and friendship in an informal manner.
- To provide a relaxed, pleasant environment in which to meet during selected coin shows and other convenient events.
- To encourage the appreciation and preservation of a Southern gold coin’s original surfaces.
- To consolidate the information, resources, and talent available to enthusiasts of these historic Southern gold coins.

Annual Membership Fees

Regular $25 (January-December).

Membership for new members joining in October, November, or December extends through the next year. Checks for membership fees should be made payable to the Southern Gold Society and mailed to David Crenshaw, P.O. Box 237, Dacula, GA 30019-0004.

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